

# Aesthetics

in a Design Build Environment

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# Case Study – Ohio River Bridges Project



Two Projects, Two Bridges, Six Design Sections 

# Downtown Crossing

- The Downtown Crossing is an \$860 million design build project in downtown Louisville, Kentucky and Jeffersonville, Indiana
- Encroached or impacted multiple historic districts
- Environmental document contained strict language regarding context sensitive design

# Downtown Crossing

- Started as a \$1.1 billion project
- Project was downsized to fit available budgets in 2011
- The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet and Indiana Department of Transportation decided to move forward with a design build project in 2012
- Project awarded to Walsh Construction in December 2012

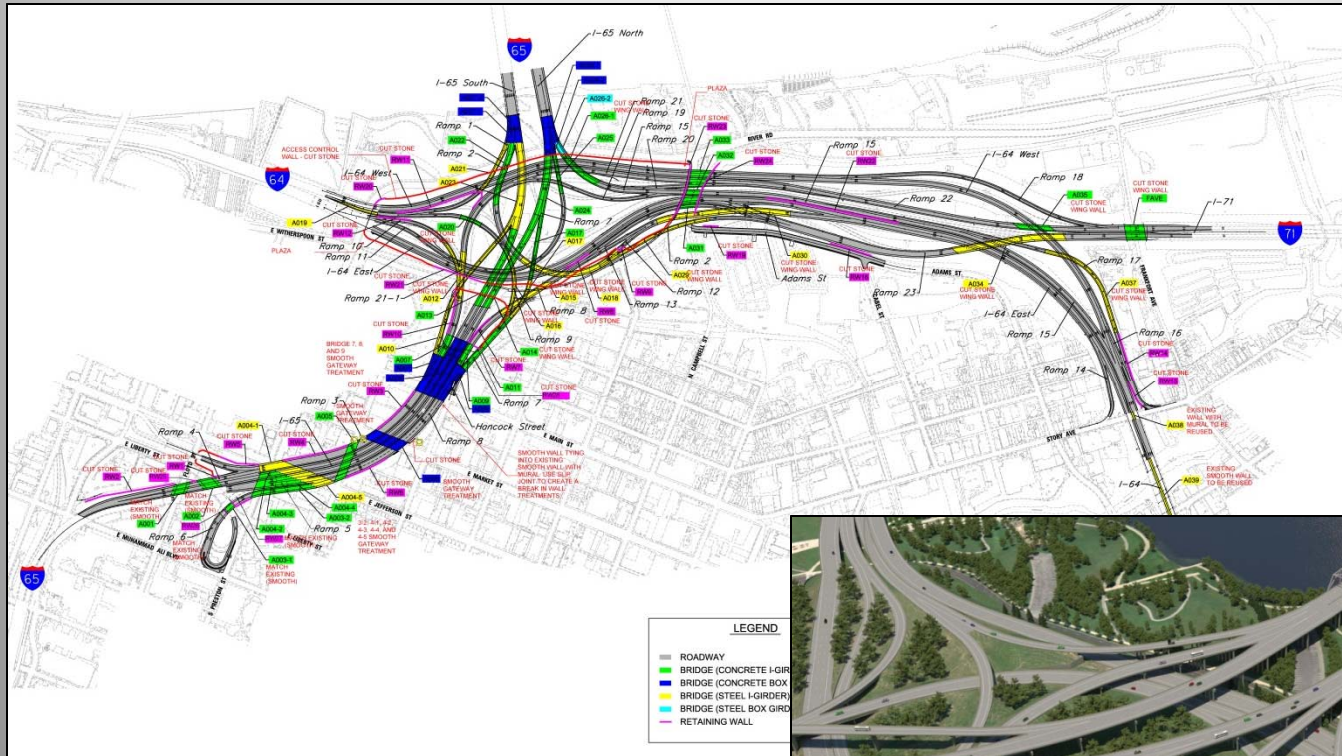
# The Project

**Confluence of three interstate highways in  
the downtown**



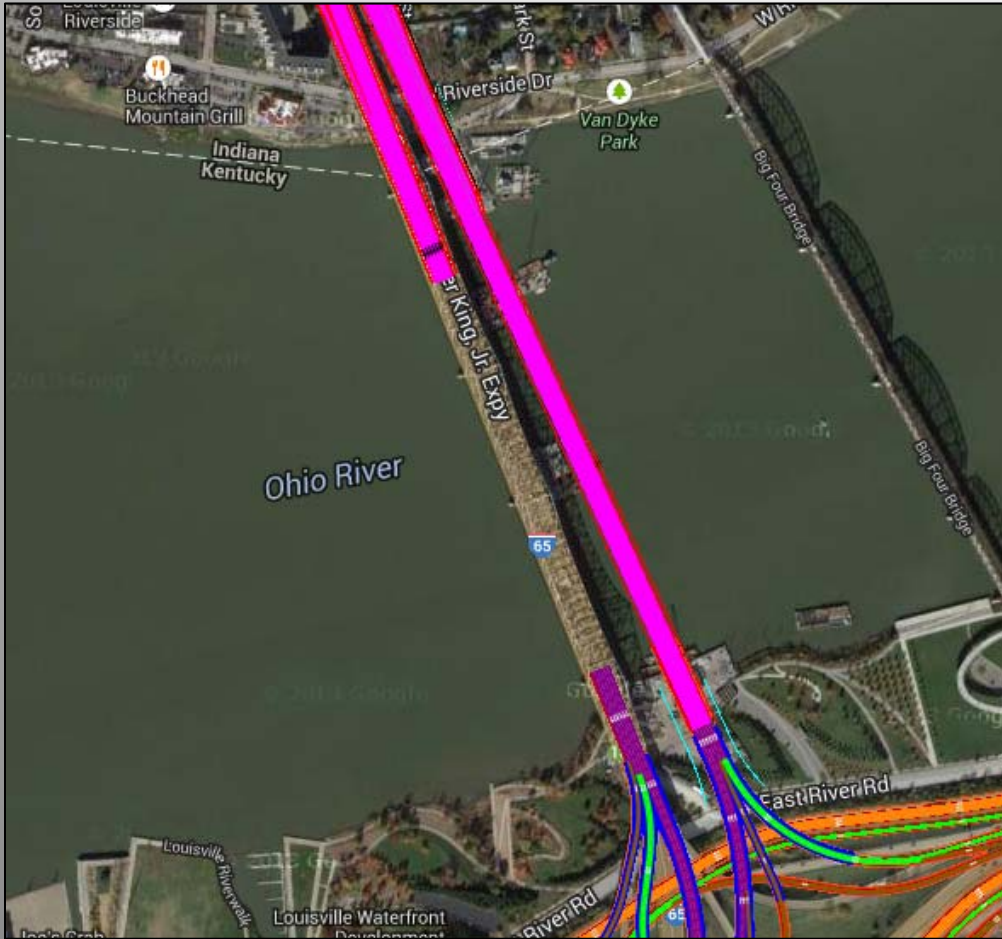
# The Project- Section 1

## Downtown Crossing



# The Project- Section 2

## New Ohio River Bridge







# Conventional Approach to Aesthetics

- **Planning/environmental phases**
- **Intense public involvement effort**
- **Starts with a blank slate**



- **Allow public input to shape concepts**
- **Outcomes may be included in the environmental document**
- **Decisions finalized prior to going into final design**

# Conventional Approach

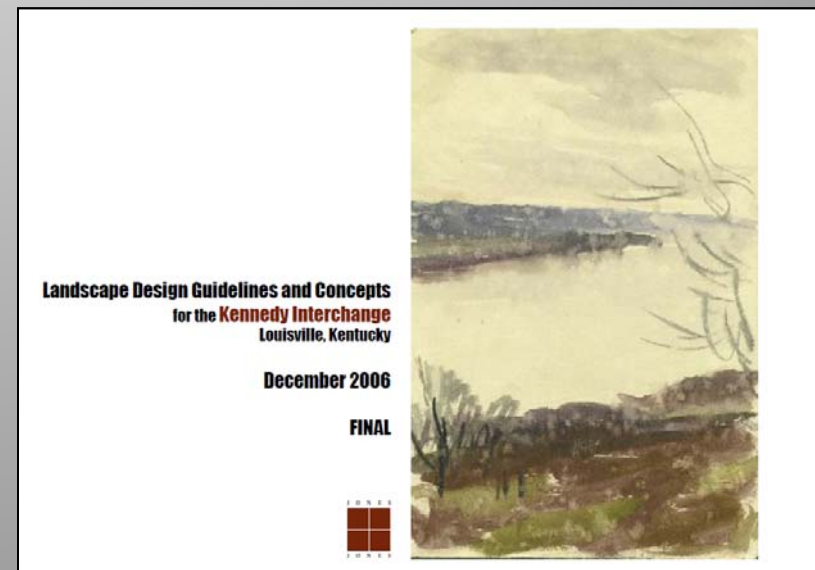
**Decisions can be made in a methodical way with plenty of time to consider budget implications!**



Prior work on the project was  
done using a conventional  
approach

# History of Prior Work

- 7 years of work to develop engineering drawings and Aesthetic Design Guidelines
- Two sets of ‘Guidelines’ were vetted with local stakeholder groups and environmental oversight committees



# History of Prior Work Between 2004 and 2008 there were over 100 stakeholder meetings

- Louisville Metro Government
- Butchertown Neighborhood Association
- Phoenix Hill Neighborhood Association
- Jewish Healthcare
- Norton Healthcare
- Waterfront Development Corporation
- Main Street Business Association
- Greater Louisville Inc. (GLI)
- River Fields



**Then came Design-Build!**



# Pursuit Phase - RFP

- Made references to the previous work but also allowed for some innovation
- Required an Aesthetics and Enhancements Manager (AEM)
- Required an Aesthetics and Enhancements Implementation Plan (AEI) prior to beginning construction

# Pursuit Phase - conundrum

DBT had to develop an approach for the proposal that was:

- Competitive in vision and scope
- Competitive in price

# Pursuit Phase - conundrum

- The project had changed considerably since downsizing
- How much previous work was still valid?
- RFP guidance asked for concept development from the DBT
- We wanted to meet RFP requirements but not price ourselves out of the project.

# Pursuit Phase-Establishing a budget

**Budget for aesthetics was constrained by two things:**

- 1. What the RFP requires**
- 2. Competition**

# Pursuit Phase-Establishing a budget

- No hard budget was provided by the Contractor
- ‘Show me whatcha got’ approach

# Pursuit Phase - Establishing an approach

Establish a set of internal goals for  
distribution of the resources

## Goals:

- Exceed RFP expectations
- Be price competitive
- Maximize benefit to local  
community
- Focus on ingress and egress points

# Pursuit Phase - The Plan

- Focused on two gateway crossings in Louisville required by the F.E.I.S.



Main Street  
Existing



Market Street  
Existing

# Pursuit Phase - The Plan

- Added gateway treatments in Jeffersonville not required



Court Avenue  
Existing



# Pursuit Phase - The Plan

- Used a maturing landscaping project in Louisville as a model



# Pursuit Phase - The Plan

- Provided two pedestrian plazas at key high-traffic locations downtown Louisville



# Pursuit Phase - The Plan

- Identify and meet with potential stakeholder group members that would be involved in development of the Aesthetics and Enhancements Implementation Plan
- Previous history with the project was invaluable

We Won! What now?

The AEI plan had to be approved prior to construction!

# The AEI Plan

Plan was developed in two phases:

- Phase 1 – Present detailed approach to client for approval
- Phase 2 – Implementation of AEI development

# Implementation

- Plan was presented to a prescribed advisory group
- The series of ‘official’ meetings were supplemented by many ‘unofficial’ sessions with key decision-makers

# Implementation

- Multiple concepts for each element of the plan were presented at the first meeting
- Stakeholders were asked to select their preferences on a paper ballot
- At the second meeting, results of the ballots were discussed and ratified



# Implementation

- There were many ‘behind the scenes’ discussions prior to the second meeting to get consensus
- There was ‘give and take’ by all parties, including the Contractor, to make it happen

# AEI Plan – Final Document

Two separate but related components:

- **Aesthetics and Enhancements  
Implementation Plan**
- **Record of Recommendations and  
Decisions**

# AEI Plan

- Discussion of the approach to meeting the RFP requirements
- Graphics of all concepts presented
- Overview of each stakeholder meeting

# AEI Plan

- These options below were presented at the AAT Meeting #2 for consideration.



Gateways: Market Street from Section 1 Workbook AAT Meeting #2. Option 1 (top), Option 2 (middle), and Option 3 (bottom).



Gateways: Main Street from Section 1 Workbook AAT Meeting #2. Option 1 (top) and Option 2 (bottom).

- Two monument options were presented at AAT Meeting #2. One had an urn adorning the top (Option 1) and the other was without any adornments (Option 2) as shown below. Option 2 was recommended by the DBT.



Gateways: Monuments from Section 1 Workbook AAT Meeting #2. Option 1 (left) and Option 2 (right).

The AAT recommended Option 2 at Market Street, Option 1 at Main Street, and the Market Street and Jackson Street option as shown below:



Final Gateway selections: Market Street (top), Main Street (middle) from Section 1 Workbook AAT Meeting #2, and the Market Street and Jackson Street Option (bottom).

- Due to construction constraints, the monuments on the east side of Main Street cannot be constructed. Therefore, monuments were added to the west side of Jackson Street at the Market Street and Jackson Street Gateway.

- The DBT has been asked to look at a unique design for the wall behind the Vermont American property. The DBT asked representatives of the developers to provide concepts for consideration. The wall will have a cut stone form liner texture.

Project Section 1	Presentation Requirements
Retaining Walls along I-65 (for embankment areas) from Witherspoon Drive south to end of Project on the eastside and westside of Interstate	Options for form liner texture, illustrated with photos and physical samples. Wall shall be a minimum of 6 feet high and shall be fully integrated into the Landscaping Plan. Walls shall serve as control of access. Consider option for a transition to full height retaining walls in the areas of street crossings.

#### THE WALSH DBT PLAN:

Walls in this section of the project are generally full height. In those areas where full height walls are not necessary to minimize right of way acquisition, they transition to a minimum of 6 feet. The transitions from

full height to shorter walls will be a smooth transition, not stepped or terraced. The base option was the Aesthetic Guidelines wall with secondary options being a range of form liner textures as shown on Page 9 of this document. The AAT preferred the Cut Stone form liner texture. Landscaping plans will address areas where slopes are exposed due to shorter walls.

Project Section 1	Presentation Requirements
Retaining Wall along south side of I-64, I-71 and associated ramps (for embankment areas) beginning with the north end of the I-71/I-64 EB ramp bridge over East Witherspoon Street, extending east to the bridges over East Witherspoon/CSX Railroad.	Options for form liner texture, illustrated with photos and physical samples. Wall shall be a minimum of 6 feet high and shall be fully integrated into the Landscaping Plan. Walls shall serve as control of access.

#### THE WALSH DBT PLAN:

The two options were a retaining wall (6 feet high) Option 1 or a free-standing metal wall at the toe of the slope Option 2, as shown on the next page and on Page 11 (Aesthetic Access Control) of the Section 1 Workbook for AAT Meeting #1 in the appendices. The AAT and DBT recommended approval of Option 1 to the BSMT.

# Record of Recommendations and Decisions

- Documented fully all decisions made
- Graphics of all alternatives selected
- Summary of all meetings
- Copies of all voting forms

# Record of Recommendations and Decisions

## Final Record of Recommendations and Decisions Section 1

### Final Graphic

Gateways: Main Street



### Recommendations and additional comments

This concept was developed from a sketch provided to the DBT by the AAT prior to the first meeting. This, and one additional concept, was provided at the second meeting. The AAT recommended this option and the DBT recommended approval to the BSMT. Monuments will be placed on the west side only on Main Street.

Gateways: Signage

**INFORMATION TO COME  
FROM A LOCAL COMMITTEE TO DEVELOP  
SIGNAGE RECOMMENDATIONS  
FOR MAIN AND MARKET STREETS**

During a discussion with the DBT, a large group representing several downtown stakeholder groups stated that they would undertake this effort. Final decisions will be provided to the DBT by the end of 2014 and, in concurrence with the KYTC and consultation with the BSHCT, a final decision will be made. The DBT has agreed to install the signage as part of the project.

Approach Spans: Kentucky



A majority of the AAT members wanted smooth columns with no reveals to match the existing columns that will be salvaged from the existing bridge and felt that the reveals presented could be a future maintenance issue.



# Lessons Learned

- Understand the minimum requirements of the RFP
- Understand the depth of aesthetic commitments
- Develop a plan that gives ‘bang for the buck’
- Be well prepared to ‘sell’ your concept in the community